(c) what according to the review is the sucess or otherwise of the implementation of the 1985 textile policy; and

(d) what measures are being contemplated by Government for the survival of handloom industry in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) and (b) A census of handlooms at the national level covering, *interalia*, certain data on the idleness of looms was conducted by Government of India through the State Governments during 1987-88. The total number of handlooms as per the census is 38.91 lakhs of which 2.79 lakhs remained idle for atleast one year preceding the day of census enumeration.

Handlooms accounted for about 26.3 per cent of the estimated total cloth production in the textile industry excluding hosiery. The estimated production of cloth in the handloom sector increased from 4323 million square metres in 1988-89 to 4537 million square metres in 1989-90 and to 4888 million square metres in 1990-91. The increase in production is an indicator to the increasing demand for cloth from handloom sector and to the addtional employment generated.

(c) According to the Abid Hussain Committee which was set up by Government to review the progress of implementation of the Textile Policy of June 1985, the following were the main hurdles which have come in the way of effective implementation of the Textile Policy :—

(i) The implementation of the Handloom Reservation Act was largely frustrated due to the litigation resorted to by certain powerloom interests and the resultant stay orders given by various High Courts against certain provisions of the Act; and

(ii) Hank yarn prices continued to rise despite various steps taken by Government to ensure availability of hank yarn to handloom weavers at reasonable prices.

(d) Government is taking effective steps for expeditious disposal of cases relating to the Handloom Reservation Act pending in the Supreme Court. A special Cell has been created in the Ministry of Textiles to review regularly prices and availability of yarn to handloom weavers and to suggest necessary corrective measures. A regular interaction is maintained by the Textile Ministry with the spinning industry to brng about a sobering influence in yarn prices and to ensure easy availability of yarn. During the Eighth Plan period, it is proposed to generate higher employment in the handloom sector by redesigning the existing schemes. These schemes will provide for greater flexibility and decentralisation and will be designed to suit the need of the area and the weavers. Constraints of coverage will be removed so as to include weavers who are outside the corporate/cooperative fold within the Government schemes. Greater emphasis will be laid on training, upgradation of skills, modernisation of looms, provision of marketing support etc. to graduate weavers to value added products as also for products suitable for export market.

Private sector involvement for development of National Highways

262. SHRI S. MADHAVAN:

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are actively considering involvement of the private sector in a big way for development of national highways;

(b) if so, whether this requires amendment to the National Highway Act 1956; and

(c) the extent to which this would improve the rapidly congesting of national highways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) it is too early to estimate the impact of private participation regarding relief of congestion on the National Highways since that will depend upon the response ultimately received from the private setcor.

Supply of Hank Yarn to Handloom Sector

263. SHRI S. MADHAVAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the quantum of hank yarn required by the handloom sector in the country;

(b) what are the steps taken to supply hank yarn to the handloom weavers at reasonable prices; and

(c) whether the South India Mills Association and the Northern India Textile Mills Association have agreed to supply the requisite quantity of hank yarn at pre-budget prices to the National Handloom Development Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) In view of the decentralised nature of production in handloom sector, it is difficult to quantify the requirement of hank yarn in the handloom sector. However, the requirement of cotton hank yarn in the handloom sector has been estimated at 372 million kgs on the basis of number of looms and monthly average productivity per loom.

(b) Central Government have arrangements of standing nature to ensure the regular supply of hank yarn to the handloom weavers at reasonable prices through various measures, such as (i) The Hank Yarn Obligation Scheme which requires every producer of yarn to pack at least 50 per cent of the total yarn packed for civil consumption in hank form; (ii) Loan assistance through National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) for setting up of new Weavers' Cooperative Spinning Mills and expanding the capacity of existing weavers' cooperative spinning mills in order to augment production for the handloom sector; (iii) Setting up of the National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC) with the primary objective of supplying hank yarn to weavers at reasonable prices;

(iv) Constitution of State Level Yarn Price Fixation Committees to regulate selling prices of hank yarn produced by cooperative and State sector mills for supplies to the handloom weavers; and (v) Complete exemption of excise duty on plain reel hank yarn and partial exemption on double cross reel hand yarn in order to make available yarn to handloom weavers at reasonable prices.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Setting up of Institute of Handloom Technology in Andhra Pradesh

264. SHRI PRAGADA KOTAIAH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have agreed for the setting up of an Institute of Handloom Technology in Andhra Pradesh; if so, when; and

(b) whether the Institute has been set up and if not, what are the reasons for delay in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) The